

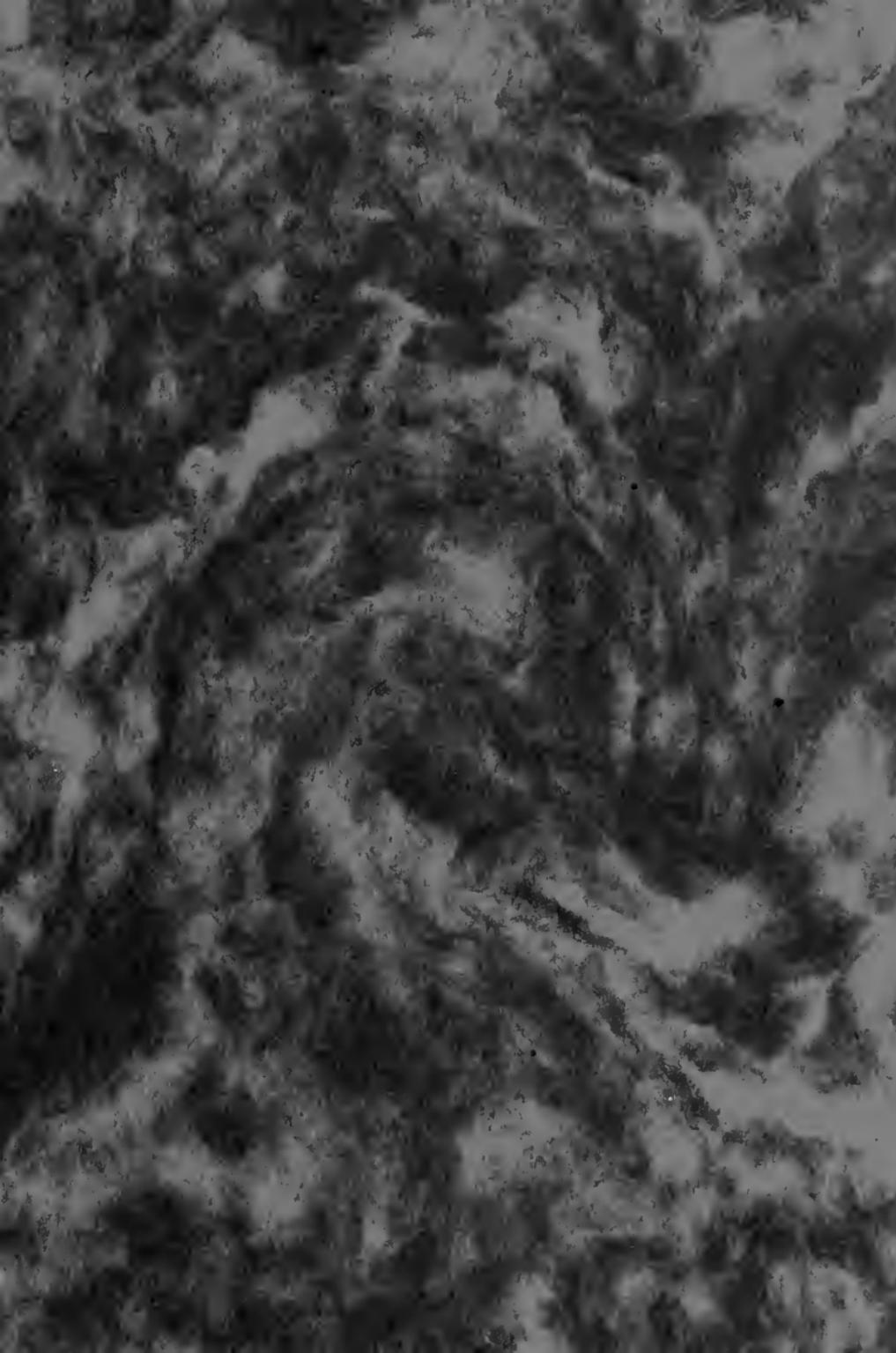


OAK LEAF

M1943

1. Pamph.
2. Deluxe brochure,
full lea.
(safe)

—
LINCOLN NATIONAL
LIFE FOUNDATION

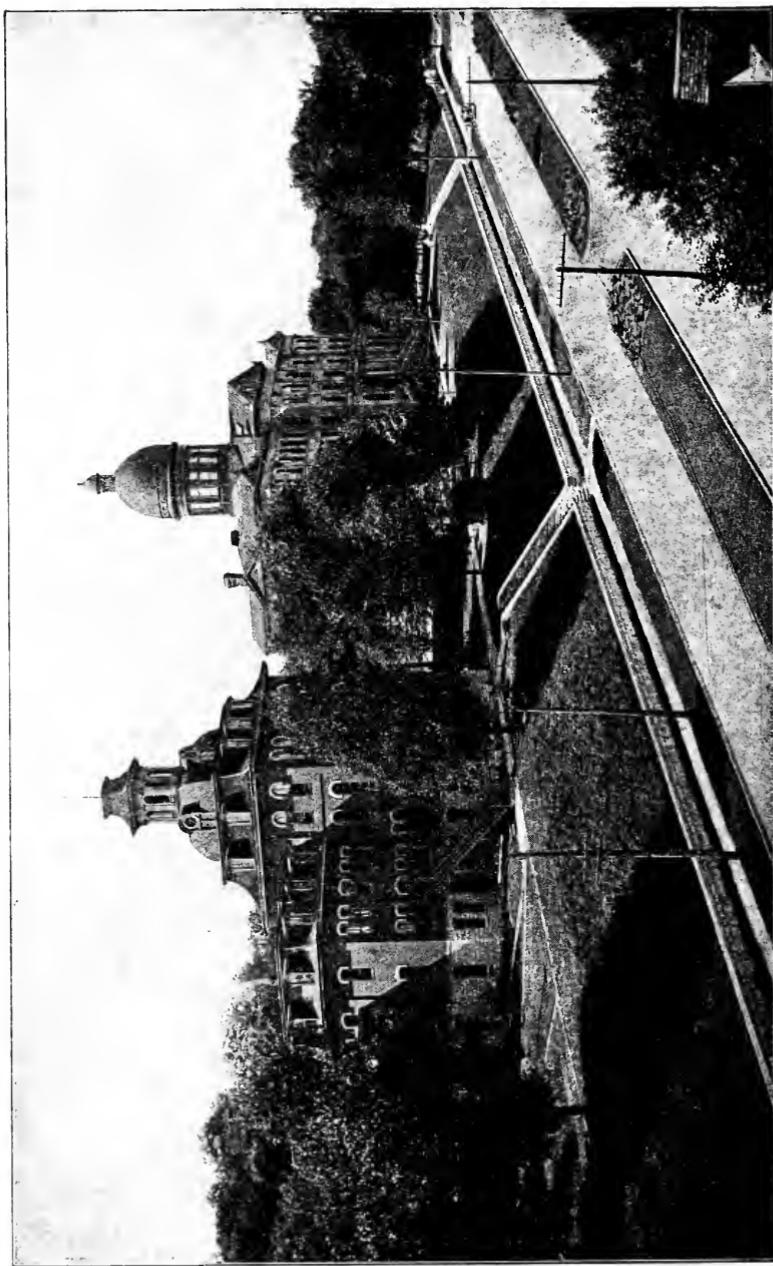


12-13
To H. D. and Fish with
the regards of

~~Detkeed~~

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2010 with funding from

The Institute of Museum and Library Services through an Indiana State Library LSTA Grant



AUGUSTANA COLLEGE AND THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY, ROCK ISLAND, ILLINOIS

ABRAHAM LINCOLN
HIS FRIENDSHIP FOR HUMANITY
AND SACRIFICE FOR OTHERS

AN ADDRESS BY
J. B. OAKLEAF



DELIVERED AT
AUGUSTANA COLLEGE, ROCK ISLAND, ILLINOIS
BY INVITATION OF THE FACULTY
FEBRUARY 12, 1909

1910

DESAULNIERS & CO.
Printers and Publishers
MOLINE, ILLINOIS





ABRAHAM LINCOLN

THROUGH all the ages no man has ever been accorded the honor which is being accorded Abraham Lincoln today. Every school-house is a mecca for the children, every college and university is holding exercises today in commemoration of the one hundredth anniversary of the birth of Abraham Lincoln. Foreign lands are vying with Lincoln's native land to do honor to his memory. It is fitting and proper that we gather in this Chapel this evening and repeat the theme which is the subject of my address on this occasion, for in so doing we tell the story of his life, recite the Gettysburg address in unison and read that peer of eulogies, the editorial of Daniel Willard Fiske, who was editor of the Syracuse, New York, *Daily Journal*, on the 15th day of April, 1865.

Were I to address only the young men and young ladies of this audience, I should want to confine myself along one line, but as the audience is composed of old and young, some of whom were on the field of action during the memorable days of the early sixties, and, as the faculty of this institution

has arranged for the exercises which are distinctively in memory of Lincoln, I shall endeavor to present such phases of Lincoln's life, as in my opinion will be best fitting for this occasion.

If I should ask those in this audience who have read the complete life of Abraham Lincoln to raise their hands, I am confident that many would not respond, yet there is not one in this audience who is not familiar, more or less, with the life of Abraham Lincoln, for the reason that so much has been written in newspapers, magazines and other periodicals concerning him that everyone must have read a great deal about Lincoln.

Lincoln The Boy

Abraham Lincoln was brought up in penury and want, and when he was but nine years old his mother died. Like all frontier boys, Abraham Lincoln was denied the benefits of the school. Schools were held in deserted cabins found here and there in the settlement, with earthen floors, small holes for windows, sometimes illuminated by as much light as could penetrate through paper greased with lard. The teachers were usually in keeping with their primitive surroundings, as the salary was not sufficient to attract men of education, and, as a rule, the pupils would, in a few months,

know as much as the teacher. While in Indiana Abraham Lincoln would trudge nine miles to school, and the last schooling he had was when he was a lad of seventeen years of age. Up to that time his whole time spent in school would not exceed six months.

Abraham was a husky lad, strong and muscular, but he was not a huntsman. We have no record, nor has anyone been able to say, that Abraham Lincoln ever killed any game, for he had too kind a heart to become a huntsman.

While at Gentryville he made a trip to New Orleans with a tradesman, on a flatboat loaded with produce, and it was on this trip that Abraham Lincoln saw the possibilities of a future for any young man who would be willing to apply himself. The thirst for knowledge, as a means of rising in the world, became a kind of passion in him and he left no opportunity unimproved that would afford him a chance to learn something that he had not known before. It was while in Indiana that he read Aesop's Fables, Robinson Crusoe, Pilgrim's Progress, History of the United States and Weem's Life of Washington, and he became acquainted with the town constable who had a copy of the Revised Statutes of Indiana, which book became to Lincoln the lodestone to which he was drawn repeatedly.

Lincoln The Young Man

Abraham Lincoln attained his full growth—six feet and four inches—two years before he became of age, and it was seldom that he met a man whom he could not easily handle, if required to do so.

In 1830, just as Lincoln had attained his majority, he came to Illinois with his father and step-mother. Thomas Lincoln, his father, had heard of the prairies of Illinois; had heard of the beauties of the land which lay to the westward; that it was possible to find hundreds of acres without a tree upon them. Having grown tired of making a field by cutting down the trees and grubbing the stumps, he decided to leave for the rich prairies of Illinois. It seemed that Fate guided the father of Abraham Lincoln, for Abraham Lincoln fell in with a class of people different from those whom he had met in Kentucky and Indiana. In Illinois, in close proximity to the Mississippi river, people from the far east had settled, coming down the Ohio, thence up the Mississippi; others having come up the Mississippi from New Orleans, and still others from the New England States by way of the Great Lakes.

When Abraham Lincoln attained his majority he bade good-bye to his father and step-mother and struck out into the world without a dollar in

his pocket, with only sufficient clothing to cover his nakedness, but with a heart as great as that which beat within the breast of any man. He was strong of limb, and had a rugged constitution that did not succumb to the primitive habits of the frontiersmen. He was a welcome guest at every cabin, at every gathering, and it only took a short time for him to be considered the leader in any community in which he settled. He had not been in Illinois very long until it was learned that he had made a trip to New Orleans and he was approached by a man who wanted to send a cargo of produce to New Orleans by way of the Sangamon and Mississippi rivers, and Lincoln consented to take charge of the cargo and make the trip. It was on this trip that he witnessed an auction sale of slaves. Standing in the slave market of New Orleans he beheld a negress on the block being sold to the highest bidder. The negress was a mulatto, with fine features, showing a sensitiveness about her surroundings that was not shown by the others, and she was, therefore, singled out by Lincoln as one who particularly felt the disgrace. At that time there was dealt the first blow to slavery, for Abraham Lincoln turned away with a sorrowful heart and remarked with a vehemence that had never before been known in Lincoln's manner, to the boys who were with him: "By God, if I ever have a chance to hit that thing I will hit it hard." He did not use the word

“God” in an irreverent manner, but he meant that if he ever got a chance to hit the institution of slavery by the help of God he would hit it hard.

Lincoln The Soldier

He returned to Illinois with his vision broadened by his second trip to New Orleans. He saw there was to be a great awakening in agriculture and the professions and he came back determined that he would leave no stone unturned to fit himself for any duty that might devolve upon him. Immediately upon his return Governor Reynolds issued a call for volunteers to subdue Black Hawk, who was then operating in the Rock river country. Lincoln thought it would be a good opportunity to see what lay to the north of him. He had no idea of what they were to do, but he knew they were going out to fight Indians, and so he and a number of his boy friends presented themselves for enlistment, and on the evening of the 7th of May, 1832, he and his command arrived at the mouth of Rock river, and on the 10th of May, 1832, he was sworn into the service of the United States. But Abraham Lincoln was not a soldier, nor was he the son of a soldier, nor did he know what was expected of him, yet his comrades elected him captain of their company on account of his popularity. On their march

from Beardstown to Yellow Banks, now Oquawka, and from Oquawka to the mouth of Rock river, Lincoln found himself in a dilemma many times as to what kind of command he should give in order that his company should make a certain move, but he was a tactful man, as he was in later years. When they came up to a high rail fence where there was a small opening, he could not think of the word of command in order to get his men through the opening in single file, so he called a halt and dismissed them, with the request that they should assemble on the other side of the fence. The chances are that he got them through quicker than if he had used the proper command.

After being elected President he told of an incident that occurred while he was in camp on Rock river. At a ball at the White House thieves made off with many of the hats and overcoats of the guests, so that when ready to take leave Vice-president Hamlin's head covering was not to be found.

"I'll tell you what, Hamlin," said a friend, "early in the evening I saw a man, possessed of keen foresight, hide his hat upstairs. I am sure he would be willing to donate it to the administration, and I will go and get it for you."

When the hat was produced it was found to be very much after the style of Hamlin's hat, but it bore a badge of mourning, which emblem the Vice-

president ripped off with his penknife. The party stood chatting merrily as they waited for the carriages to be driven up, when a man stepped directly in front of Mr. Hamlin and stood staring at the "tile" with which his head was covered.

"What are you looking at, sir?" asked Hamlin sharply.

"Your hat," answered the man mildly. "If it had a weed on it, I should say it was mine."

"Well, it hasn't got a weed on it, has it?" asked the Vice-president.

"No, sir," said the hatless man, "it hasn't."

"Then it isn't your hat, is it?" said the proud possessor of it.

"No, I guess not," said the man as he turned to walk away.

When this little incident was explained to President Lincoln, he laughed heartily and said:

"That reminds me, Hamlin, of the 'stub-tailed cow.'

"It was a long time ago, when I was pioneering and soldiering in Illinois (1832), and we put up a joke on some officers of the United States army. My party and I were a long way off from the comforts of civilized life, and our only neighbors were the garrison of a United States fort. We did pretty well for rations, had plenty of salt meat and flour, but milk was not to be had for love or money; and as we all longed for that delicacy, we thought

it pretty mean that the officers of the fort, who had two cows—a stub-tailed one and a black and white one—offered us no milk, though we threw out many and strong hints that it would be acceptable. At last, after much consultation, we decided to teach them a lesson and to borrow or steal one of those cows, just as you choose to put it. But how it could be done without the cow being at once identified and recovered was the question.

“At last we hit on a plan. One of our party was dispatched a day’s ride to the nearest slaughterhouse, where he procured a long red cow’s tail to match the color of the stub-tailed cow. After possessing ourselves of this animal, we neatly tied our purchase to the poor stub, and with appetites whetted by long abstinence we drank and relished the sweet milk which ‘our cow’ gave. A few days afterwards we were honored by a call from the commander of the fort.

“‘Say, boys,’ said he, ‘we have lost one of our cows.’ Of course we felt very sorry and expressed our regret accordingly. ‘But,’ continued the commander, ‘I came over to say that if that cow of yours had a stub tail, I should say it was ours.’

“‘But she hasn’t a stub tail, has she?’ asked we, sure of our point.

“‘No,’ said the officer, ‘she certainly has not a stub tail.’

“‘Well, she isn’t your cow then,’ and our argument was unanswerable, as was Hamlin’s.”

The term of service for which Lincoln and the rest of the volunteers had enlisted being now ended, a large number re-enlisted and among them was Abraham Lincoln. At the time of his second enlistment he was sworn into the service by none other than the gallant Robert Anderson, who was in charge of Fort Sumter when the flag that Lincoln loved so well was fired upon by one of its own. This bright, energetic, young lieutenant did not then realize that the tall uncouth youth, standing six feet and four inches, would be the occupant of the White House thirty years later, but so it is with this ever-revolving wheel of chance, showing new phases, presenting new things never thought of before.

The Black Hawk war finally came to an end and Lincoln never saw the enemy as he subsequently said he never came close enough to smell powder. Black Hawk had surrendered and the Rock river country was cleared of the invader.

Lincoln The Politician

Lincoln had no sooner returned to his home in the Sangamon bottoms than he became a candidate for the legislature. This was a new role to Lincoln,

but one that he accepted with a great deal of pleasure for it was a delight to him to mingle with the people. He was, as the politician says, "a good mixer," yet he never drank and never smoked, so that he could not in an off-hand way hand a cigar to a friend and ask him to have a smoke with him, nor could he ask a friend to go to a bar and take a drink, but he had ways far more effective than these. He was defeated the first time he ran for the office, but it was always a source of great pleasure to him to know that everyone of the boys who went with him to the Rock river country voted for him. He was subsequently elected and served with honor in the legislature. He favored "internal improvements" which question was then agitating the minds of the people.

Lincoln The Surveyor

But the legislative honors were not lucrative and he resorted to many other means of gaining a livelihood, such as keeping a store, which ended in disaster, working for others for small pay, and finally he took up surveying. It is stated that he had no money with which to buy surveying instruments and that his first chain was a grape-vine, but as land was cheap and there were no difficult boundaries to settle, the grape-vine answered

the purpose for awhile. It is a queer coincidence that our first President should also be a surveyor; that Washington and Lincoln, the two men who stand uppermost in the hearts of the people as Presidents of the United States, should begin life by surveying. But when we realize that they were both in new countries, that the demand was made upon someone who was able to run the lines and locate corners, it is no wonder that when there was a person in a community who was capable of doing it he should be sought after and urged to assume such duties.

Lincoln was not a speculator; never owned but one piece of real estate in this state, and that was his home in Springfield. He was very much unlike a certain man whom he had appointed to a position in the General Land Office, and who was also a surveyor, but who used his position as a means of getting considerable land. Lincoln heard of it, and, knowing that the man had been doing surveying on the side, in addition to surveying for the public, Lincoln looked at him with a quizzical eye and said to him: "I understand you are monarch of all you survey." The thrust went home. The man resigned his position.

About this time in Lincoln's career occurred something which was unusual to Lincoln but not unusual to the average young man. I think all young men have to go through such an experience

and they are the better for it; they become better men; they have a better conception of life. Lincoln bestowed his affection upon Ann Rutledge, who will never be forgotten because her name was linked with the immortal Lincoln. She died in 1835 and when her remains were lowered into the grave Lincoln's heart was broken. He never referred to Ann Rutledge but that a tear came into his eye. She was a good girl and would have made him an excellent wife, but Fate decreed otherwise. It was at this time that Mr. Lincoln first read the poem by William Knox in which he saw so much beauty, and when he would visit the grave of Ann Rutledge the lines would come to him:

“Oh! why should the spirit of mortal be proud
Like a swift-fleeting meteor, a fast flying cloud,
A flash of the lightning, a break of the wave,
He passeth from life to his rest in the grave.”

Her grave is marked by a boulder, placed there by some kind friend, and on the face is chiseled “Ann Rutledge,” and no one can stand by the side of that boulder without feeling that he is very close to the soul of Abraham Lincoln.

Lincoln The Lawyer

Lincoln did not consider that the work he was doing was in keeping with his ideas and he began to read law and was finally admitted to the bar.

But he felt that he must make his home at the Capitol. He went to Springfield and met his old friend Speed, told him what he intended to do, figured what it would cost to fit up a room and it amounted to \$17.00, which was beyond his means. All he had with him were the saddlebags in which he had stored away his belongings, and he had ridden into Springfield on a borrowed horse. He told Speed of his predicament. Speed looked at him, felt sorry for him and told him he had a room upstairs that was large enough for both of them and that he could occupy it in company with him if he wanted to. Lincoln went upstairs, looked at the room, came back and said, "Speed, I have moved." Such was Lincoln's entrance into the Capitol of the State of Illinois, in 1837. He was a Whig elector on the Harrison ticket in 1840, and was elected to Congress in the fall of 1846, and at the close of his term, in the spring of 1849, he went back to Springfield fully intending to quit politics and take up law in earnest. He had been at the Capitol of the nation; he had seen there what he had not seen at home; he met and conversed with educated men, he saw affluence on every hand, whereas at home he saw only poverty. He realized that these men would be coming westward and that he would have to cope with other talent than the frontiermen; that it was necessary for him to equip himself for the day when he would have to meet these men

face to face in forensic battles. And from that time until 1856 Lincoln was out of politics. But during this time his mind had become broadened. He was then considered one of the foremost lawyers of the State. He met and vanquished the best talent that was to be found. He was now counted an antagonist who must be reckoned with, and his legal services were in demand. He became acquainted with David Davis, O. H. Browning, Leonard Swett, Stephen A. Douglas, S. T. Logan, Lyman Trumble and a score of others. In every county seat from Peoria to the south of Springfield, from the Mississippi to the eastern border of the State, he was known, and not a term of court in any of these circuits would pass but that Lincoln's services were in demand.

To give an idea of the men he had to meet, I will relate an incident which occurred in 1842. Joseph Smith, who was then a Mormon Prophet living at Nauvoo, Illinois, the Mormon stronghold on the banks of the Mississippi, had been arrested and was wanted by a sheriff from Missouri, and the chances were that if they had got him into Missouri they would have railroaded him to the scaffold. Smith was charged with having instigated an attempt by some Mormons to assassinate Governor Boggs, of Missouri. Mr. Butterfield, one of the ablest lawyers of Chicago, on behalf of Smith, sued out from Judge Pope a writ of *habeas corpus* and Smith was brought before the United States District

Court at Springfield. On the hearing it clearly appeared that he had not been in Missouri, nor out of Illinois within the time in which the crime had been committed, and that if he had any connection with the offense the acts must have been done in Illinois. Was he then a fugitive from justice? Mr. Lamborn, the attorney-general of Illinois, appeared on behalf of the people. Mr. Butterfield moved for the discharge of Smith. The "Prophet," so-called, was attended by his twelve Apostles and a large number of his followers and the case excited great interest. The court room was thronged with prominent members of the bar and public men. Judge Pope was a gallant gentleman of the old school and loved nothing better than to be in the midst of youth and beauty. Seats were crowded on the Judge's platform, on both sides and behind him, and an array of brilliant and beautiful ladies almost encircled the Court. Mr. Butterfield, dressed *a la* Webster, in blue dress coat and metal buttons, with a buff vest, arose with dignity and in profound silence. Pausing and running his eyes admiringly from the central figure of Judge Pope along the rows of lovely women on each side of him, he said: "May it please the Court, I appear before you today under circumstances most novel and peculiar. I am to address the Pope (bowing to the Judge) surrounded by angels (bowing still lower to the ladies) in the presence of the Holy Apostles

in behalf of the Prophet of the Lord." Can you imagine Abraham Lincoln in such presence, such surroundings? It does not appear that he took part in the case but he was no doubt there for it was in the city of Springfield and he was interested as well as others. Mrs. Lincoln was one of the "angels" referred to. Lincoln never omitted an opportunity to hear a speech. At one time E. D. Baker, an old friend of his, was making a speech and Lincoln was occupying an office on the second floor and there was a trap-door right over the platform where Mr. Baker was speaking. Lincoln opened the trap-door and stretched himself out on the floor, and, looking down through the hole, was listening to the speech. There was a gang of rowdies in the hall who intended to break up the meeting. The Whig doctrine, announced by Baker, was not in harmony with their ideas and they were about to pull the speaker off the platform. Lincoln thought it was time for him to take a hand and he let himself down through the trap-door and dropped to the platform, much to the amazement of the crowd. He assumed a belligerent attitude, and told them that this was a free country and Mr. Baker should be allowed to finish and then if any of them wanted to say anything they could use the platform as long as they desired. Baker finished his speech.

To show Lincoln's tact and wit I may mention that one time when he was a candidate for the

legislature the Democrats had secured the services of one Forquer, a very able speaker and a very fine looking man who dressed with excellent taste. He had, however, left the Whig party and gone over to the Democratic party for the sake of an office and he had ridiculed Lincoln a great deal. It was just a little more than Lincoln could stand. This man Forquer had recently built a fine house in Springfield on the site occupied by the new Supreme Court building, one of the finest in that part of the country, and had equipped it with lightning rods, the first lightning rods that some of the people had seen, and the house attracted a great deal of attention. People would come miles to take a look at that house and the lightning rods and hear the comments of the people as to what the lightning rods were supposed to do. When Lincoln got up to reply he stood very calm but his eyes flashed with anger, his pale cheeks indicating his indignation, and he commenced his speech by saying: "I am informed that this gentleman has said that he intended to take this young man down, alluding to me, but I will state that I am not as young in years as I am in the tricks and trades of the politician. But," said he, pointing his long, bony finger at Forquer, "live long or die young, I would rather die now, than, like the gentleman, change my politics and with the change receive an office worth \$3,000.00 a year and then feel obliged to erect a lightning rod over my

house to protect a guilty conscience from an offended God."

As stated before, when Lincoln's congressional term ended he returned to Springfield with the intention of giving up politics, but the country would not allow him to remain dormant very long and he was soon compelled to come out and take a part in the fight that was being waged. New questions arose that demanded attention, because at this time the slave power had been at work, like a gigantic devil fish, reaching out its tentacles in all directions, seeking to gain territory here, to gain a foothold there in order to spread the curse of slavery.

Lincoln The Leader

In 1819 to 1821 a most determined resistance was made to the admission of Missouri as a slave state and it was finally settled by what is known as the Missouri Compromise, carried through Congress largely by the personal influence of Henry Clay. By this compromise Missouri was admitted as a slave state with a law providing that all the western territory north of the parallel of latitude $36^{\circ}, 30'$ should be forever free. The conflict between the free and the slave states was terminated in favor of the slave holders in the form of this compromise, which for a long time was considered sacred by all

parties. If Missouri had at that time come in as a free state it probably would have been decisive and would have given the balance of power to the North, and perhaps it might have saved the republic from the great civil war.

The Whigs in 1850 took the position that the slavery question was settled by the compromise of 1821 and should not be re-opened, and the policy had the approval of President Fillmore. But in 1854 the enemy showed itself above the horizon of the Missouri compromise and demanded its repeal by what is known as the Kansas-Nebraska Bill. This bill which would repeal the Missouri compromise was strongly supported by Douglas, who, only five years before, had said: "The Missouri compromise is akin to the Constitution and canonized in the hearts of the American people as a sacred thing which no ruthless hand would ever be reckless enough to disturb." Kansas was admitted and the Missouri compromise question was repealed in that the new states should decide by a vote of their own people whether or not they should be free or whether they should be slave states; what followed is well known. Kansas had to fight for its admission to the Union and on its escutcheon is inscribed "*Ad Astra per Aspera,*" to the stars through difficulties. The slave holders from every city of Missouri ran thousands of men over the borders, and the Lecompton Constitution was the result,

made possible by illegal votes. By reason of the repeal of the Missouri compromise the Republican party became a necessity and the loyal Whigs, the free-soil men, loyal and free-soil Democrats, organized the Republican party.

In 1858 the Republicans put their second state ticket in the field and Abraham Lincoln was at the convention. The convention was held at Springfield. Mr. Wharton, who was then a citizen of Rock Island, and the editor of the *Rock Island Advertiser*, a staunch Whig paper, and he himself a staunch Whig, was a delegate from Rock Island county, holding a proxy from Joseph Knox, a Democrat who was a strong supporter of Douglas. Mr. Knox had been elected as a delegate but did not feel that he should show his hand, and, therefore, gave his proxy to Mr. Wharton. Mr. Wharton was at Springfield and sat on the steps of the platform. Mr. Lincoln was called out and made a speech. When he finished he sat down by the side of Mr. Wharton and asked his opinion about it. These facts I have in a letter that was recently written me by Mr. Wharton, who is now residing in California. Mr. Lincoln asked Mr. Wharton what he thought of the speech and the latter replied: "It is not the best you can do and I think the people want more and I know you are able to do it." Mr. Lincoln then asked Mr. Wharton to write a resolution and present it commendatory of the ticket which had

been named and said he would support the resolution and make some added remarks. In these added remarks he made the famous speech known as "A house divided against itself" speech. He then said: "A house divided against itself cannot stand." He referred to the slave and the free states. He saw the inevitable conflict. He saw the war cloud on the horizon. He saw the storm approaching. He fully realized that it would not be long until the slave power would demand its mess of pottage, at the mouth of the cannon if need be. There was the groom and there was the bride. They had for nearly three quarters of a century lived in peace and harmony; a little trouble on the surface now and then, but not sufficient to mar the welfare of the nation, but now he saw that they were being separated, that they could not agree and that the house was being divided and that it was impossible for it to stand.

In 1858 the celebrated Lincoln-Douglas debates took place and Lincoln became famous. We have, during the past summer and fall, been celebrating the fiftieth anniversary of these debates, and men who heard the Lincoln-Douglas debates were honorary guests at the exercises.

Lincoln was defeated for the senate, Douglas was triumphantly elected; although Lincoln had received the popular vote of the state, the state was so gerrymandered that Douglas received the ma-

jority of the members of the legislature. After his election in 1859, Douglas made a triumphant tour to Washington, going down the Mississippi to New Orleans around by steamer to Washington. Every city of note announced his coming by the blowing of the whistles and ringing of bells. He was dined and wined everywhere and was hailed as a hero, but Douglas knew that his career would be short, for he, too, had seen the coming of the inevitable conflict and that he could not and would not insult the flag.

One of the crowning events of Abraham Lincoln's career, as it seems to us now, was the invitation that he received in the winter of 1860 from a company of young men who had arranged a lyceum course in Brooklyn, and who had invited Lincoln to come to Brooklyn and deliver a speech. They had heard of him in the east. His debates with Douglas had made his name known over the whole country and they were anxious to have this man of the prairies come and talk to them. He went, but upon his arrival there he found he was not to speak in Brooklyn, as he supposed (I think, in Beecher's Church), but they had arranged to have the meeting take place at Cooper Institute. On the 27th of February, 1860, Abraham Lincoln found himself a guest at the Astor House in New York City. A committee called on him and told him where he was to speak and it was then he learned that he

was to speak at the Cooper Institute. He had his carpet bag with him. He had bought a new suit of clothes before leaving home and had crowded them into the carpet bag. They were not such a fit as the young men in this audience would be satisfied with. If a boy should come to this college with as ill-fitting clothes as Lincoln wore that day he would be jeered from the time he reached the building until he left at the close of his studies. But clothes do not make a man, and it did not affect Lincoln. At Cooper Institute he met many men of whom he had read. There was William Cullen Bryant, who presided; there was Horace Greeley; there was Mr. Field, and there were fifty or more prominent men on the platform. The audience was not large for the night was very stormy, but those who came out came to hear a man who was making a name for himself and making a name for his country. He held his audience spellbound. No stories, no foolishness; but he started out from the beginning as a lawyer would argue a case before the Supreme Court of the United States. In the afternoon a reporter from the *Tribune* asked him whether or not he had any manuscript. Lincoln handed him his speech. It was set up in type that afternoon and that manuscript was thrown into the waste basket. If that manuscript could be had today it would sell for \$10,000.00 at auction. So this would make another point for Russell Conwell's

lecture "Acres of Diamonds." Lincoln spoke without manuscript. He had his matter well in hand and from the beginning to the end, for more than two hours he held his audience as no man had ever held an audience before in that building. Yet none of those men who occupied the platform deigned to accompany Lincoln to his hotel after his speech. Some of the young men who had charge of the meeting took him to a club-room where they had a luncheon and after they had lunched Lincoln started for the Astor House. He asked to be shown the way, so a young man by the name of Mr. Nott, who is still living, said he was going that way and would take him there. On the way down Mr. Nott noticed that Lincoln limped and asked him if he was lame and Lincoln replied, "I have a new pair of boots on and they have chafed my heel until my foot is very sore." Then Mr. Nott suggested that they get on a street car, which they did, but before arriving at the Astor House Mr. Nott's street was reached and he told Lincoln to remain on the car and the conductor would announce the Astor House as the street car passed the hotel.

Such was the reception given Abraham Lincoln, in New York City, in 1860. A year later the streets were crowded with people eager to get a glimpse of the newly elected President of the United States.

Mr. Nott and a Mr. Brainard (Mr. Brainard is still living and I had the pleasure of meeting him

a year ago in New York) arranged to have the Cooper Institute speech published in pamphlet form and well annotated, and when they began to annotate his speech they found that there was not a library in the city of New York that could furnish them with the authorities necessary, and they could not imagine how Abraham Lincoln was able, with the limited libraries to be found in the west, to get up and present such a strong array of facts; so they wrote to Mr. Lincoln for his brief and he replied that he had none.

The learned men on the platform at Cooper Institute could have said of him what was said of the lowly Nazarene eighteen centuries before: "From whence did this man get his wisdom, from whom did he gain his knowledge?" For they knew he had not sat at the feet of a master.

There hangs on the walls of Brasenose College, Oxford University, an engrossed copy of a letter written by Mr. Lincoln, November 21st, 1864, to Mrs. Bixby, of Boston, Massachusetts, who had lost five sons on the field of battle, as a specimen of the purest English and most elegant diction extant.

After a short trip, during which Mr. Lincoln visited some of the principal cities in the New England States, he returned to his home in Springfield and immediately thereafter steps were taken by his friends to present his name to the Republican convention that would convene in May at Chicago.

It was necessary for him to have a solid delegation from his own state and that was brought about with very little difficulty, and with a solid state delegation behind him his friends felt confident of his nomination at the convention. If the convention had been held in New York, or any of the eastern cities, it would have been impossible to have nominated Lincoln, but it was so decreed that he should have the support of his own state in order to win out, and, after a two-day struggle in the convention, during which time the Illinois delegation was very busy, Lincoln was victorious and Illinois' favored son was at the November election elevated to the highest position in the gift of the nation. Election being over, the task of preparation for removal to Washington to assume the heavy burden which had been placed upon his shoulders was begun. The South was dissatisfied with the election. They were not willing to abide by the result and the war cloud which Lincoln had predicted years before began to show itself upon the southern horizon.

Lincoln The President

Lincoln was to leave the scenes of his early struggles, and standing on the rear platform of the coach which was to carry him to Washington, and looking down into the faces of his friends

who had congregated there to bid him farewell, he said:

“My friends, no one not in my situation can appreciate my feeling of sadness at this parting. To this place, and the kindness of these people, I owe everything. Here I have lived a quarter of a century, and have passed from a young to an old man. Here my children have been born, and one is buried. I now leave, not knowing when or whether I ever may return, with a task before me greater than that which rested upon Washington. Without the assistance of that Divine Being who ever attended him, I cannot succeed. With that assistance, I cannot fail. Trusting in Him, who can go with me and remain with you, and be everywhere for good, let us confidently hope that all will yet be well. To His care commending you, as I hope in your prayers you will commend me, I bid you an affectionate farewell.”

Can you imagine how heavy his heart must have been as the train sped away from all that had been near and dear to him? He did not expect to return, for he felt that he was rushing into a maelstrom of civil war and what the end would be no one could foresee. He assumed the duties of Chief Magistrate of the nation and surrounded himself with men of honor and of integrity as his advisers, selecting them from different portions of the country and of different political beliefs, and among them were competitors

for the honor of the presidential nomination at Chicago. There were those who felt that upon their shoulders must rest the responsibility of the nation and not upon the shoulders of him who was at the nation's head, but they very soon learned that Abraham Lincoln was President and they were his advisers.

The war came and Lincoln proved himself equal to the task. The enemy was not the severest foe with whom the President had to contend for he found that his cabinet was honeycombed with deceit and his generals were quarreling among themselves. But through all Lincoln pursued the even tenor of his way, bearing his burdens with that fortitude the equal of which had never been known. I may mention that Seward, who was the best educated man of the cabinet, and who occupied the post of secretary of state, felt that he must be the diplomat and to him Lincoln must look for that peculiar phraseology of state papers which was necessary to be promulgated. At one time Lincoln, in a state paper, used the word "sugar-coated" and Seward remonstrated with him and said, "Mr. President, you must remember that you are not now addressing a paper to a lot of back-woodsmen or frontiersmen, but this paper will become a part of the archives of the nation and I would suggest that you erase these words and substitute something more elegant." Lincoln replied : "My

dear Secretary, no one who will follow us or will have occasion to look at these papers will fail to know what 'sugar-coated' means." The words were not erased.

Mr. Chase, who was secretary of the treasury, was one of the hardest problems with which Lincoln had to deal, but he recognized his ability and put up with a great deal of back talk from Mr. Chase. Mr. Chase had the presidential bee buzzing in his bonnet, in fact, there must have been a whole hive of them from the amount of noise they made, and Chase had no sooner been inducted into office than he began to shape things so that he would be nominated four years thereafter to succeed Lincoln. The friends of Lincoln did not admire the stand that the President took for they felt that he should know what Chase was doing. They did not imagine that he knew every step Chase was taking and what was in Chase's mind. At one time there was a delegation that went to Lincoln and told him what Chase was doing. Lincoln listened quietly and then said: "Gentlemen, that puts me in mind of a story. Out west there was a man who was known as a hen-pecked husband, and the neighborhood witnessed the wife of this husband giving her husband a whipping. The man took it very quietly, got out of the way and went down town. Those who had witnessed the affair felt very much put out with the man who would stand by and allow his

wife to thus treat him, and they went to him and said: 'Mr. Blank, we have no respect for you when you will allow such things as that. Why don't you take your own part like a man and not allow your wife to thus treat you?' The husband turned around to the friends and said: 'Well, boys, it didn't hurt me a bit and you have no idea what a power of good it does Mary Ann.' And so," said Lincoln, "it is with Chase. It don't hurt me any and it does Chase a power of good."

During the trying days of '61, '2 and '3 Lincoln's heart was heavy for he knew the fate of the nation hung upon his shoulders. He also knew that the slaves on the southern fields were looking for a Moses to deliver them out of bondage. Their prayers were uttered in the cabins and in the cotton-fields, and, as the "Quaker" poet has so well portrayed:

"We pray de Lord, He gib us signs
 Dat some day we be free!
De norf winds tell it to de pines,
 De wild duck to de sea.
We tink it when de church bells ring!
 We dream it in de dream,
De rice bird mean it when he sing!
 De eagle when he scream."

Prayers were said by thousands of good men and women that out of the curse of war would come the blessedness of freedom. Lincoln made a vow to God that if a certain event happened he would free

the slaves, and, in obedience to that vow, on the 1st day of January, 1863, Lincoln proved that the pen is mightier than the sword, for he struck the shackles from three million slaves and the din of the clanking of the shackles when they fell to the ground was heard around the world, across the prairies of the west to the peaks of the Rockies, which, like a mast of a wireless telegraph station, received the message and thence it was wafted to the isles of the sea and to the uttermost parts of the earth, blended with the music of the spheres and died away upon the shoreless sea of humanity. Then the poor slaves heard the refrain of the angelic host:

“Peace on earth, good will toward men.”

[Lincoln The Martyr]

Illinois had furnished a man who stood at the head of the nation and Lincoln turned to Illinois for help and he called to his aid for the highest post of honor in the army, Ulysses S. Grant. Grant had no sooner taken charge of the armies than he brought order out of chaos and the persistent hammering towards peace was pursued and Lincoln knew that peace would be the result, but so it is with many who prosecute a noble deed, who perform a great act, who lay out a work; they are struck down as

it is about to be consummated. The veil is lifted and Lincoln is permitted to peer into the future, beyond its portals, and he sees on the distant horizon that the end is drawing near. Richmond had surrendered, and under the famous apple-tree at Appomattox, Lee had laid down his arms at the feet of the "silent Commander." People were rejoicing all over the north, the soldiers on the march towards the Capitol received their laurels and were singing hymns of joy, and amidst the singing, the shouts and the glorification of a reunited country, the assassin steps from out of the dungeon and strikes the fatal blow, and he whom the nation had honored, whom the nation had loved, lay cold in death. On that 15th day of April, 1865, as the sun rose out of the far east in the Atlantic Ocean, it cast its beams across the lifeless body of our beloved President. It was then that the country was wrapped in mourning, and from every altar all over the land prayers were offered up to the Almighty to help the nation in its dark hour. The true and noble men of the press who had stood by the President in their editorials, found it a hard task to tell the people what was in their hearts. Our own beloved Dr. Seiss, in St. John's Lutheran Church, Philadelphia, preached a sermon on the day of national mourning and chose for his text Deuteronomy 33, 7 and 8: "And Moses was an hundred and twenty years old when he died. His eyes were not dim

nor his natural force abated. And the children of Israel wept for Moses on the plains of Mohab thirty days."

Garfield in his eulogy of Lincoln said, "When Lincoln died heaven was brought so close to earth that the whispering of the angels was heard by the children of men."

One of the greatest editorials that was written on the death of Lincoln was written by Daniel Willard Fiske, who was then editor of the *Syracuse, New York, Daily Journal*, and within half an hour after the news had been flashed over the wires that Abraham Lincoln was dead, he wrote the following editorial:

"Slavery and treason have demanded of the American republic a great and final sacrifice. For four mournful years, on the battlefield and in the hospital, she has poured out the noble blood of her brave children and offered up the precious lives of her patriot citizens. But a sacrifice of blood still more noble, of a life still more precious, was needed to make the oblation complete. This last, this fearful offering has now been laid upon the nation's reeking altar. Abraham Lincoln is dead.

"The shaper of the republic's destiny, he was murdered on the day when that destiny was finally moulded in the matrix of truth and justice. The savior of the republic's life, he yielded up his own just as the republic's existence was forever secured.

The Commander-in-chief of our long-battling armies, he sank in death at the very moment when those armies had achieved a lasting triumph.

“In him was typified, more than ever before in any single individual, the cause of human liberty, and he perished in the hour which saw that cause victorious. He so guided the course of events that out of the bitterness of slavery a whole race entered into the blessedness of freedom, and he passed out of the world while the clanking echoes of the chains which he had broken had not yet died away. Through a night of storm and terror he steered the trembling ship of state, and when the morning dawned upon the vessel, sailing with its costly freight through a placid sea, the hand that had saved it became powerless. Who shall say that since that other good Friday, eighteen hundred years ago, when murderous men struck at the existence of Divinity itself, a riper life has been ended by a fouler blow?

“The universal signs of sorrow attest the depth and breadth of the people’s grief. The saddened nation clothes itself in black. The church bells toll a requiem which makes the sorrow-laden air still heavier. Sable festoons adorn, with gloomy decoration, our streets and squares. The minds of men are filled with a woe which the death of a father or brother could not have evoked. But there is a mourning still more appropriate to the occasion than these outer signs of inner feelings.

Let us mourn the dead President by being worthy of his greatness. Let us resolve that the liberty which he saved shall never again be lost, that the fetters which he sundered shall never again be joined, that the Union which he restored shall never again be broken. Let us live for human rights as he lived; let us die for them, if need be, as he died.

“The great republic’s head is gone; the great republic’s heart is broken. God help the great republic.”

Illinois had given to the nation a man whom the nation honored, and the nation, to show its gratitude, took charge of the remains of our beloved President, conveyed them with tender hands back to his adopted state, and in the city of Springfield, which he had left five years before when he bade his fellow citizens an affectionate farewell, he was buried. There his shrine is visited by thousands who stand near his remains with uncovered heads, feeling that they are in the presence of the dust of the greatest of all Americans.

Today, as we are celebrating the one hundredth anniversary of the birth of Abraham Lincoln, let us consider the price of his success, let us emulate his example of honesty, integrity and devotion.

Young women, young men, what will your answer be when it is asked of you what is the price of your success? The price of the success of your preceptors is not to be reckoned in dollars and cents for the

price of the success of the teaching profession is friendship for humanity and sacrifice for others. Will you place your success on the basis on which we place Lincoln's success today, or will you place your success on the basis of dollars and cents? Will you in your life work follow the precepts of Lincoln and pluck a thistle and plant a flower where you think a flower would grow in order to make the world better for your having lived in it? If you follow the precepts of Lincoln, and, like him, put your fellow men above self, and country above all, then when the question is asked, what is the price of your success, the answer will be found on the pages of your life, Friendship for Humanity and Sacrifice for Others.

As Lincoln made history so we, too, are making history by honoring his memory, and as we today know the truth of the sentiment uttered by Lowell so will succeeding generations know the truth of Lowell's commemoration ode, and, like us, will repeat the lines:

“Great captains, with their guns and drums,
Disturb our judgment for the hour,
But at last silence comes;
These all are gone, and, standing like a tower,
Our children shall behold his fame,
The kindly, earnest, brave, foreseeing man,
Sagacious, patient, dreading praise, not blame.
New birth of our new soil, the first American.”



71.2009.084.04573

